

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRUSSE 17601 030558Z  
ACTION SIL-01

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 IO-13 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01  
CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 SP-02  
STR-05 TRSE-00 LAB-04 OMB-01 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
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/115 W

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R 021914Z DEC 77  
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3483  
INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO  
AMEMBASSY QUITO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 17601

USEEC

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PLAB, ICFTU, SHUM  
SUBJ: LABOR MISSION TO ECUADOR

REF: BRUSSELS 17124

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED:

1. A TWO-MAN MISSION IS GOING TO ECUADOR DECEMBER 9 TO INVESTIGATE THE LABOR SITUATION THERE, THE INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS (ICFTU) ANNOUNCED DECEMBER 1. MISSION MEMBERS WILL BE J. J. DEL PINO, GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE ICFTU'S REGIONAL ORGANIZATION, ORIT, AND ENZO FRISO, HEAD OF THE LATIN AMERICAN DEPARTMENT IN THE ICFTU SECRETARIAT.

2. ACCORDING TO AN ICFTU PRESS RELEASE, MORE THAN 100 WORKERS WERE "MASSACRED" IN OCTOBER DURING A STRIKE AT AN ECUADORIAN SUGAR REFINERY, "AZTRA", AND  
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SUBSEQUENTLY "MANY" TRADE UNION LEADERS, INCLUDING JOSE CHAVEZ CHAVEZ, PRESIDENT OF THE ECUADORIAN CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS (CEOSL), WERE ARRESTED.

3. BOTH THE ICFTU AND VARIOUS AFFILIATES--THE GERMAN DGB AND THE NORWEGIAN LO, FOR EXAMPLE--HAVE SENT CABLES OF PROTEST TO THE PRESIDENT OF ECUADOR, BUT HAVE RECEIVED

NO RESPONSE, ACCORDING TO ICFTU SOURCES. THE ICFTU HAS ALSO LODGED A FORMAL COMPLAINT WITH THE ILO.

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4. AN INTERNAL ICFTU DOCUMENT PREPARED FOR THE NOV. 23-25 EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING--OBTAINED ON A CONFIDENTIAL BASIS BY USEC LABOR ATTACHE FROM A LABOR SOURCE OUTSIDE THE SECRETARIAT--DESCRIBES THE ECUADORIAN LABOR SITUATION IN VERY CRITICAL TERMS. KEY POINTS:

(A) TAKING A HARDER LINE ON LABOR IN RECENT MONTHS, THE "DICTATORIAL REGIME" HAS FORMALLY PROHIBITED STRIKES AND HAS CRACKED DOWN ON UNIONS IN OTHER WAYS, INCLUDING A BAN ON THE 30,000-MEMBER NATIONAL EDUCATORS UNION.

(B) IN AUGUST THE GOVERNMENT, WHILE RAISING THE CONSUMER PRICE OF SUGAR BY 54 PERCENT, DECLINED TO INCREASE SUGAR REFINERY WORKER WAGES DESPITE A COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT PARTLY TYING REFINERY WAGES TO SUGAR PRICES. WHEN WORKERS AT THE AZTRA REFINERY STAGED A SIT-IN STRIKE IN PROTEST, THEY WERE ATTACKED BY 200 POLICEMEN. IN FLEEING FROM TEAR-GAS BOMBS AND SHOOTING, WORKERS PLUNGED INTO A DEEP CANAL SURROUNDING THE REFINERY AND MANY DROWNED. THE OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT COUNT OF THE DEAD WAS 25. THE UNION, HOWEVER, CLAIMS THAT POLICE HAULED AWAY ABOUT 125 CORPSES. CONFIDENTIAL

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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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